

GDC Press Release

18 December 2006

GDC asks for views on CPD for dental care professionals

The General Dental Council (GDC) is calling for views on its compulsory continuing professional development (CPD) scheme for dental care professionals (DCPs), which it proposes to introduce in July 2008.

A review group was set up by the GDC in July 2006 to consider the development of CPD for DCPs. The group has proposed a scheme which will run on the same principles as the scheme for dentists and is now asking for the views of the public, dental professionals and others on two key areas.

- How many hours of CPD should DCPs undertake?

The GDC is proposing to introduce a CPD scheme in which DCPs will complete 150 hours of CPD in a 5-year cycle with 50 of those hours being verifiable CPD. This equates to 30 hours per year of which 10 are verifiable CPD.

- Which recommended core topics should DCPs complete as part of their CPD?

The GDC plans to include the same recommended core topics (medical emergencies, disinfection and decontamination, and radiography and radiation protection) as dentists as part of verifiable CPD for clinical dental technicians, dental hygienists, dental nurses, dental therapists and orthodontic therapists.

For dental technicians the GDC intends to substitute dental materials and equipment for radiography and radiation protection. This is because the dental technician curriculum does not include radiography and radiation protection as it does for other DCP groups.

GDC President Hew Mathewson said:

“All dental professionals need to keep their knowledge up-to-date by carrying out continuing professional development, which is an important part of our role in protecting the public.

“Extending the compulsory continuing professional development scheme to dental care professionals is the first step in building towards a revalidation scheme for all our registrants. We will consult separately on our revalidation proposals for the whole dental team next year.”

The consultation document is available on the GDC website at <http://www.gdc-uk.org/News+publications+and+events/Consultations/>. The closing date for responses is 16 March 2007.

Ends

For media enquiries, please contact Rachel Lea on 020 7009 2782.

Notes to Editors

1. The consultation document on 'Compulsory continuing professional development for dental care professionals' can be downloaded from the GDC website at <http://www.gdc-uk.org/News+publications+and+events/Consultations/>. For a hard copy of the consultation document, or more information on the review please email mloose@gdc-uk.org or telephone 020 7887 3819.
2. CPD is defined as "study, training courses, seminars, reading and other activities under taken by a dental professional, which could reasonably be expected to advance his or her professional development as a dental professional."
3. The GDC recommends that all dentists carry out verifiable CPD in the following core subjects from the beginning of their next CPD cycle:
 - medical emergencies (at least 10 hours per CPD cycle)
 - disinfection and decontamination (at least 5 hours per CPD cycle)
 - radiography and radiation protection (at least 5 hours per CPD cycle)

In addition, the GDC recommends that dentists working in a clinical environment carry out CPD (verifiable or general) to make sure that they are up to date in:

 - legal and ethical issues
 - handling complaints
4. The GDC's new guidance on CPD for dentists can be downloaded from the GDC website at <http://www.gdc-uk.org/News+publications+and+events/Publications/Guidance+documents/CPD+-+For+Dentists.htm>
5. All dental hygienists, dental therapists, clinical dental technicians and orthodontic therapists must be registered with the GDC to work in the UK - whether they work in the NHS, private practice or any other form of practice.
6. From 31 July 2008 all dental nurses and dental technicians must be registered with the GDC to work in the UK. The GDC is encouraging dental nurses and technicians to join the register during the two-year transition period, which will enable dental nurses and technicians who have been working in their role for a number of years to join the register on the basis of validated experience. Dental nurses and technicians joining the register after 30 July 2008 will need to have a GDC-recognised qualification.